



The Starry Night Gazette

Vincent House, 4801 78th Avenue
Pinellas Park, FL 33781
Telephone 727-541-0321



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JULY 2008

When States and Countries Converge

This past month was an exciting month for Vincent House. First, we presented at the Annual National Convention of NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) held in Orlando from June 13-16. Then from June 18-19, we co-hosted an international New Clubhouse Development training with the International Center for Clubhouse Development (ICCD). It was a busy week indeed.

NAMI National Convention

Vincent House members and staff were among the nearly 2,000 people who traveled to Orlando for the Annual NAMI convention. Members Steve Scofield and Rand Pierce, and Vincent House co-founders Elliott and Dianne Steele shared the excitement and promise of ICCD Clubhouses with attendees from throughout the United States and Mexico. A highlight of the convention was a plenary session given by Judge Steven Leifman on "The Florida Mental Health/Criminal Justice Transformation Project."



and the reasons for our success. Rand gave testimony to the advantages of Clubhouse and how Vincent House helped him move from unemployment to permanent full-time work in his field of interest.

Later in the day, Steve and Elliott presented with Kathy Bayes, Executive Director of NAMI Fort Wayne, and Joel Corcoran, Executive Director of the ICCD, on ICCD Clubhouses and how NAMI groups can start one in their respective communities.

Vincent House member Karen Maloof kicked off the event with a personal testimony on how her life has changed since coming to Vincent House. Presenters from our area included Senator Dennis Jones, Pinellas Park Mayor Bill Mischler, Representative Bill Heller, Vincent House Board President and Pinellas Park Chief of Police Dorene Thomas.



Member Clyde Kobayashi highlights the dignity and respect of Clubhouse programs during a tour of Vincent House.



Steve Scofield, at left, gives a personal account of how Vincent House has helped him regain control of his life and achieve his goals.

On Monday, June 16, Elliott, Rand and Steve presented with Dr. Bob Drake from Dartmouth University on the topic of employment for persons living with mental illnesses. Steve talked about his life experiences and shifted the focus from academia to the real possibilities and real world of Vincent House. Elliott explained ICCD Clubhouse Employment programs

Clubhouse Development Training



Seventy people from twelve working groups spent two intense days in Pinellas Park learning how to start an ICCD Clubhouse in their community. Participants included people from Ghana, Denmark, Sweden, Utah, New Hampshire, South Carolina, and Florida (Panama City, Jacksonville, Tallahassee, Gainesville, Miami Lakes, Miami Shores, Kissimmee, and Palm Beach County). Joel Corcoran, Ralph Bilby, Jack Yatsko, and Denise Hast were on hand from the ICCD to lead the conference. Vincent House assisted with the planning and hosted all of the participants for a morning at our Clubhouse.

Member Justin Shea, picture below, brought the training to its feet during the finale for his presentation of an original music video inspired by his experience at Vincent House.



Without the valuable contributions of our supporters, we could never achieve everything we strive for. Thanks!

In Honor of Anonymity

Vincent House would like to extend a big THANK YOU to the anonymous donor who sent two \$500 Money Gram Orders.

Heaven Sent

This past month, a kind fellow walked in our door one day with an envelop filled with \$2,000 in donations from "Church in the Park". Thanks to all of you!



Dorene Thomas, Vincent House Board President, adds a personal and professional touch.

Members, New and Old, Tell Their Story

The Chance I Have Been Waiting For

By Bobbi Hirsch

Hi! My name is Bobbi Hirsch. It's hard to express just how much Vincent House has changed my life. I was just drifting and feeling like I had no purpose. Now I am doing things that give me a feeling of accomplishment. Besides that reward, I have met some very nice and friendly people. I look forward to coming here every day. I am never disappointed in how much Vincent House enriches my life through meaningful tasks. I enjoy a great relationship with the staff and members, who all work together to make me feel at home. Vincent House continually helps me re-learn the skills I need to learn again or brush up on things I may have forgotten. Every day is a new accomplishment. While I am sure there is much to learn, now I am ready to take on anything. To sum it all up, Vincent House has given me the chance to turn my life around.



Bobbi Hirsch, left, and Anna McDonald, right, working in the Business Unit.

The Place Where I Belong

Hello Vincent House members, staff, friends and supporters. My name is Anna McDonald. I started attending Vincent House in February of 2004. As of March 15, 2008 I have been a member of this clubhouse for four years. Since I have been a member, I must say Vincent House has evolved from a fledgling baby eagle to a full grown triumphant adult eagle. I use the statement triumphant because to me this Clubhouse represents so many different things. Right now, it represents a new beginning for me. I feel like a prodigal daughter returning home to a place where I belong. I say belong because with all the stigma leveled at people with mental illnesses sometimes we feel inferior to people who are so-called "normal" people. Whether you are a person with a mental illness, the parent, friend or child of a person with a mental illness, you know that we are indeed our own worst critics. At Vincent House we are encouraged daily to be proud of ourselves and the things that we accomplish daily minute by minute. Here we accomplish things in leaps and bounds.

Yours Gratefully,
Anna McDonald

That Clean Cut Feeling

A new trend has begun! On June 7th, professional hair stylists Sandy Hall, Debbie Spaulding and Chris Sulimay, all family members of Vincent House, donated their time for a special salon day event. It promises to be the first of many haircut weekend socials at Vincent House.



The Clubhouse experience is about moving forward in life and achieving one's goals. Looking and feeling good are part of the success we strive for.

Above, Lisa Sanders has her locks cut by Sandy Hall. Below, Vincent House members are looking good after a day well spent with hair stylists Chris Sulimay, fifth from left in top row and Sandy Hall, bottom left.



New Vehicle Obtained with Department of Transportation Grant



Members and staff celebrate the arrival of a brand new Ford Fusion.

Two years of hard work and persistence came to fruition! This past month, Vincent House received the first of two new vehicles with a grant from the U. S. Department of Transportation. A new Ford Fusion will be used to transport members, often by other members who volunteer as drivers, to jobs sites, important medical appointments and Clubhouse functions. It'll be a more fuel efficient way to get around town. We are also eagerly awaiting a new van. Thank you Department of Transportation!

Member-to-Member Tutoring Program Resumed

The Member Services Unit has re-implemented a member-to-member tutoring program to support members in achieving their educational goals. If you are interested in assisting with tutoring or receiving tutoring, please contact Member Services.

By Mike Taddeo

Hi, my name is Mike Taddeo and I, along with eleven other Vincent House members are helping out with tutoring. Brittany Spaulding and I are currently working on basic Algebra in Chapter 1, the Number Line. Does that sound familiar to you? I am told that the group of tutors has quite wide and varied learning experiences, and Jonathan says we can cover most any topic. So, if this sounds good to you, stop by Member Services and let us help you out. Thanks.





The Challenge I Gladly Accept

By Stephanie Freskos

I work at a Vincent House TEP at **SeashellBooks.com**. They supply used books to Amazon books. It is very challenging, as we have to meet a quota by processing a minimum number of books during the four hour shift. Currently I am working on paperback books, and my goal is to do 500 books in four hours, or 125 books per hour. We have to be both quick and accurate, and it takes a lot of concentration. We enter data into the computer about each book, rapidly assessing the age and condition for each one. I am lucky in that I have received a great deal of help from other more experienced co-workers. They have given me tips on how to increase my speed, and do a better job in the time allotted. I have benefited greatly from their knowledge. Some newer books have a bar code that is scanned on an electric scanner like groceries at the grocery store. Those are the easiest to process quickly. Others have a ten digit number called the ISBN that you type into the computer to identify them. The oldest books have to be looked up on the internet to find an identifying number to categorize them. I appreciate the challenging opportunity Vincent House has given me to work at the first job I have had in eight years.



TRANSITIONAL EMPLOYMENT

- Pamela Adams
- Jeffrey Albertson
- Susan Alvey
- Gigi Behar
- Brian Craver
- Jackie Cunningham
- Adam Franz
- Stephanie Freskos
- Stephen Gregosky III
- Larry Haines
- Alex Houser
- Aimee Hunnel
- Carol Jackson
- Karen Maloof
- Gayle Marchiniak
- Mary Opalanko
- Lisa Sanders
- Brittaney Spaulding
- Allyn Spidella
- Athena Steele
- Michael Taddeo
- Jackie Williams
- Ed Wohlford

- Suncoast Center
- Liberty Lanes
- Tri-Glo/Raytheon
- Cornerstone Linens
- Cornerstone Linens
- Cornerstone Linens
- Cornerstone Linens
- SeashellBooks.com
- Suncoast Center
- Suncoast Center
- SeashellBooks.com
- Cornerstone Linens
- Galleria Plumbing
- Cornerstone Linens
- Senior Services
- Cornerstone Linens
- Cornerstone Linens
- Cornerstone Linens
- Cornerstone Linens
- Cornerstone Linens
- Cornerstone Linens
- Liberty Lanes
- Tri-Glo/Raytheon

Supported & Independent Employment

- Michael Ballenger
- William Champion
- Debbie Cibik
- Tess Dainiels
- Eddie Gares
- Dennis Hill
- Gary Hinkson
- Brian Howe
- Bonnie Lawniczak
- Brian Lutz
- Alvis Mills
- John Markle
- Ralph Morphew
- Philip Noonan
- Angela Parker
- Rand Pierce
- Michael Ralston
- David Reed
- Shannon Riley
- Ron Ritchie
- Chris Schaer
- Justin Shea
- Joe Stabile
- Jason Sulimay
- Michael Taddeo
- Terry Taggart
- Judy Wilson
- Irrigation Specialist
- Recovery Specialist
- Driver
- Housekeeping
- Recovery Coach
- Theater Usher
- Floor Maintenance
- Prep Technician
- Machine Operator
- Food Preparation
- Recovery Coach
- Lawn Maintenance
- Food Service
- Maintenance
- Transportation
- Peer Specialist
- Transportation
- Transcriptionist
- Recovery Coach
- Transportation
- Telemarketer
- Recreation Leader
- Floor Maintenance
- Receptionist
- Book Clerk
- Pet Groomer
- Transportation

"If it's not happening, we'll make it happen."
- Berhanu Youssouf

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The International Center for Clubhouse Development lands at Vincent House. Read more on page 1.



JULY 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
		Grilled Cheese Sandwich & Tomato Soup	Chili Dogs & Potato Salad <i>Dennis Hill</i> Employment Dinner Apple Cinnamon Glazed Chicken	Jerry's Homemade Cheeseburger <i>Daniel Shellabarger</i>	Independence Day <i>Charles Arundel</i> <i>Toni Citelli, Eddie Gares</i> <i>Anthony Kaliski</i> Outing @ 7:30 pm	No Social Outing Scheduled
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<i>James Palmquist</i>	Chicken Casserole <i>Carlos Cabral</i> <i>Costantine Tsavaris</i> <i>Jackquelyn Williams</i>	Baked Ziti with Vegetables <i>Norman White</i>	Britt's Bacon & Egg Salad Sandwich with Pickles & Chips	Lori's Jerk Chicken, Black Beans and Rice	Chef's Surprise Pizza & Movie "National Treasure II"	Clearwater Aquarium
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	Mild Italian Sausage on a Bun with Tater Tots <i>Eileen Anastasia</i> <i>Larry Haines</i> <i>John Roberts</i>	Pasta Primavera	Dave's Taco Salad <i>Nick Cercone</i> Employment Dinner Lasagna with Salad	Mike's Mac & Cheese	Chef's Surprise	Seminole Eight Movies
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
<i>Michael Taddeo</i>	Angela's Crab Cakes <i>Raju Ratti</i>	Stir Fried Vegetables & Rice <i>Robert E. Parker</i>	Baked Green Peppers with Beef Stuffing	Britt's Turkey and Mashed Potatoes	Chef's Surprise <i>Michael Ballenger</i> <i>John Cavanagh</i>	Picnic at Millennium Park
27	28	29	30	31		
	Beef, Bean and Cheese Burritos	Vegetable Stuffed Baked Potato <i>Stephanie Bain</i>	Chicken Caesar Salad	Tomato Soup & Dave's Sandwich		

Menus are subject to change. Casey's Café offers alternative lunch – call to order before 11:00 A.M.